

Message Text

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PAGE 01 WELLIN 01999 310516Z

14

ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 EUR-10 PM-03 DODE-00 NSCE-00

NSC-10 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 IO-03 NEA-06

PRS-01 RSR-01 /073 W

----- 095880

P 310430Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6969

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MANILA PRIORITY

CINCPAC PRIORITY

CINCPACREP CANBERRA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L WELLINGTON 1999

LIMDIS

CANBERRA FOR CINCPACREP

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, SEATO

SUBJECT: NEW ZEALAND PARTICIPATION IN SEATO EXERCISE PX 49

REF: A. STATE 149072

B. BANGKOK 11426

1. SUMMARY. AMID SOME CONFUSION, GNZ OFFICIALS
AFFIRM THAT NEW ZEALAND WILL PARTICIPATE IN TRAINING
EXERCISE WHENEVER HELD, AND WHETHER AUSTRALIA PARTICIPATES
OR NOT. CAVEATS ARE THAT SILENT SUBMARINE BE INCLUDED
IN EXERCISE AND NEW ZEALAND NOT ASSUME LEADERSHIP ROLE
NOR MAKE UP FOR MISSION GOA UNITS. END SUMMARY.

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2. ON EVENING JULY 30, MINDEF FAULKNER AFFIRMED TO

POLOFF THAT GNZ PREPARED TO PARTICIPATE IN PX-49 EXERCISE, WITH OR WITHOUT AUSTRALIA, AND WHENEVER AND WHEREVER HELD.

3. IN MEETING JULY 31 WITH BRIG. GEN. HASSETT, CHIEF, DEFENSE POLICY AND PAUL EDMONDS, AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE TO THAILAND AND MFA POLICY ADVISOR TO MINDEF, THEY AGREED THERE MUCH CONFUSION OVER EXERCISE, CITING JUST-ARRIVED CABLES FROM GNZ MISSIONS IN WASHINGTON AND BANGKOK. BANGKOK MESSAGE DATED JULY 30 SAID ALL SEATO MEMBERS BUT ONE (UNIDENTIFIED) HAD BEEN CANVASSED AND AGREED THAT IN CIRCUMSTANCES PX-49 SHOULD BE QUOTE INDEFINITELY POSTPONED UNQUOTE WHICH MINDEF TAKES TO MEAN CANCELLED. MESSAGE FROM NZ EMBASSY WASHINGTON SAME DATE INDICATES USG NOT KEEN ON GOING AHEAD.

4. BASED ON THESE CABLES, CHIEF DEFENSE STAFF WEBB HAD JUST DECIDED TO RECOMMEND THATGNZ GO ALONG WITH INDEFINITE POSTPONEMENT. HOWEVER, FOLLOWING POLOFF VISIT, AND IN DISCUSSING SUBSTANCE REFTEL A, WHICH INDICATED USG HAS NOT YET MADE DECISION, HASSETT IS URGENTLY QUERYING NZ EMBASSY BANGKOK FOR CLARIFICATION ITS MESSAGE WHILE AT SAME TIME INFORMING GENERAL WEBB OF FAULKNER'S STATEMENT CONCERNING PARTICIPATION.

5. REGARDING FAULKNER'S STATEMENT, HASSETT AND EDMONDS ADDED CAVEAT THAT SILENT SUBMARINE MUST BE INCLUDED FOR TRACKING PRACTICE OR EXERCISE OF NO VALUE TO GNZ.

IN ADDITION, SOMEONE OTHER THAN NEW ZEALAND WOULD HAVE TO FILL IN THE GOA LEADERSHIP ROLE. SPONSORSHIP OF EXERCISE NOT REALLY OF MUCH CONCERN, WHETHER SEATO, ANZUS OR MULTINATIONAL JOINT EXERCISES.

6. EDMONDS STATED THAT DEFENSE WILLING TO GO AHEAD WHETHER OR NOT AUSTRALIA PARTICIPATES. (SECDEF ROBERTSON AND FAULKNER HAVE BOTH INDICATED TO CHARGE AND POLOFF THAT THEY WOULD DERIVE SATISFACTION IN EXERCISE BEING CARRIED OFF WITHOUT AUSSIES.) ON OTHER HAND, EDMONDS SAID MFA WOULD OPT FOR REASONABLE DELAY IF IT WOULD MEAN EVENTUAL GOA PARTICIPATION.
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7. GNZ READING OF AMBASSADOR TOM CRITCHLEY'S PRESENTATION AT JULY 20 COUNCIL REPS MEETING (REFTEL B) GENERALLY SEEMS TO SQUARE WITH OURS; I.E. THERE APPEAR TO BE SOME LOOPHOLES AND FLEXIBILITY IN GOA POSITION REGARDING SEATO WHICH MAY IMPROVE IN TIME.
WOOD

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